

REMARKS

Applicants submit that by the present Amendment and Remarks, this Application is placed in clear condition for immediate allowance, because the Examiner indicated that all pending claims contain allowable subject matter. Moreover, the present Amendment does not generate any new matter issue or raise any new issue for that matter, because claims 3, 4, 9, 10 and 13 have merely been placed in independent form, and claims 1, 2, 5 through 8 and 14 through 16 cancelled. Accordingly, entry of the present Amendment and Remarks, and favorable consideration, are respectfully solicited pursuant to the provisions of 37 C.F.R. §1.116.

Claims 3, 4 and 9 through 13 are pending in this Application. In response to the Office Action dated September 26, 2003, claims 3, 4, 9, 10 and 12 have been placed in independent form, with claim 11 dependent upon claim 10 and claim 13 dependent upon claim 12. Claims 1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 14 through 16 have been cancelled. Applicants submit that the present Amendment does not generate any new matter issue.

Applicants acknowledge, with appreciation, the Examiner's indication that claims 3, 4 and 9 through 13 contain allowable subject matter. As claims 3, 4, 9, 10 and 12 have been placed in independent form, with claim 11 dependent upon claim 10 and claim 13 dependent upon claim 12, Applicants submit that all pending claims are in condition for immediate allowance. For completeness Applicants will address the imposed rejections.

Claims 1, 2, 7 and 16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103 for obviousness predicated upon JP09-002832 (J'832) in view of JP6-199536 (J'536).

Claims 5, 6 and 14 through 16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103 for obviousness predicated upon J'832 in view of J'536 and Kubo et al.

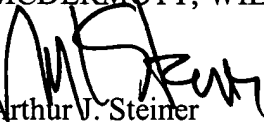
Each of the above rejections is traversed. Indeed, each of the above rejections under 35 U.S.C. 103 has been rendered moot by canceling claims 1, 2, 5 through 7 and 14 through 16. Applicants, therefore, submit that the imposed rejections under 35 U.S.C. 103 are no longer viable.

As previously pointed out, claims 3, 4, 9, 10 and 12 have been placed in independent form, with claim 11 dependent upon 10 and claim 13 dependent upon claim 12, each of claims 3, 4 and 9 through 13 having been indicated to contain allowable subject matter. Accordingly, this Application is in condition for immediate allowance. Favorable consideration is, therefore, solicited.

To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. 1.136 is hereby made. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account 500417 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date: December 11, 2003